

THE O V V L E

By Michael Drayton
Esquire.

Noctuas Arbenas.



L O N D O N

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Notes to the Secretary of the Board of Directors

Bent Juel-Jensen

MICHAEL
DRAYTON
COLLECTION

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(iii)

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copy.

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TO

THE WORTHY

AND MY MOST ESTEEMED

Patron Sir *Walter Aston*, Knight of the
Honorable Order of the

BATH.

FOr the shrill Trumpet and sterne Tragick sounds,
Objects out-ragious and so full of feare;
Our *Pen* late steep'd in *English Barons* wounds,
Sent war-like accents to your tune-full eare.
Our active *Muse* to gentler *Morals* dight;
Her slight conceits, in humbled tunes doth sing;
And with the Bird (regardlesse of the light)
Slowely doth moue her late high-mounting wing.
The wreath is *Iuy* that ingirts our browes,
Where-in this Nights-Bird harboreth all the day: 10
We dare not looke at other Crowning boughes,
But leaue the *Lawrell* vnto them that may.

Lowe as the earth, though our Inuention moue:
High yet as heauen (to you) our spotles loue.

A 3

Michaell Drayton.

TO
 THE
 MOST
 EXCELLENT
 AND
 MY MOST ESTEEMED
 FATHER
 Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight of the
 Honourable Order of the
 Bath.

Of the still Thunder and firm Tropic sounds
 Object our rages and so full of care;
 Our eyes are steep'd in English Bayes wounds
 And you like accents to your time full care.
 Our active Muse to gentle Morals dign;
 Her flight conceits in humbled tunes doth sing
 And with the bird (regardless of the light)
 Slowly each more her high-mountain wing
 The wreath is wise that hangs our brow
 Where in this Night first harbours the day
 We dare not look at other Crowning boughs
 But let the Lawd into them that may
 I owe as the earth, though our inward motion
 A light as heaven (to you) our spirit's love.

Walter Raleigh



To the Reader.

REader, I thinke it not amisse breefely to let thee know, that a
ycere is almost now past, since this small Poeme was lastly fini-
shed: At which time (it gaue place by my inforcement) vndertak-
ing then in the generall joye of the Kingdome, and my zeale to his
Highnesse, to write his Majesties descent in a Poeme gratulatorie.
And now, for that this subject may (perhapes) seeme idle and
worthlesse: I might this answer (to him that will see in reading, or
read with vnderstanding) that the greatest maisters in this Arte,
(though my selfe, not for any affectation of singularitye) haue writ-
ten vpon as sleight matter. As the Princes of the Greekes and La-
tines, the first of the Frogges warre, the latter of a poore Gnatte:
and VIDA veriewittlike of the Chest-playe and Silke-worme.
Besides many other that I could recite of the like kinde. By how
much immateriall, so much the more difficult to handle with any
encommiastick defence, or passionate comparison, (as their strong
testimonie) who can give vertue her due, and by the powrefulnes of
witte, maintaine vice not viciously. Some other likewise in a para-
doxicall manner, as ISOCRATES Oration in prayse of HELLEN
whom al the world disprayseth: AGRIPPA's declamation vpon the
vanitie of the Sciences, which knowledge, all the world admireth.
This leauing thee fauorable to censure of my poore labours, I
ende.

M. DR.



In Noctuam Draytoni.

QUæ noua Lemniacas deturbant tela volucres?
Quis furor aligero perstringit corpore Graios
Transfixo, procures? Posita Pæantius irâ
Contulit Herculeas ad Troica fata pharetras.
Fallimur? an puro tonuit pater altus Olympo?
Aut tremuit sonitu Phœbæj Cælifer arcus?
Novimus augurium: tanto Deus ille tamultu
Sacrorum exagitat mortalia pectora vatum.
Hinc furor in sylvas *Draytonum* mittit: oberrat
Hinc saltus nullo signatos tramite Musa:
Hinc & in æriam libratur machina gentem:
Quæ ferit immemores (iterato verbere) reges:
Proterit & Vulgus (audaci more) profanum.
Eia, age: dum crebrò fugiat tremebundus ab ictu
Immitis seruus vitij, dece dat aboris
Anglorum longè: lustratis lampade sancta
Cujus conjuncti exultant fulgore *Britanni*.

A. GRENEVVAI.





THE OVVE

What time the Sunne by his all-quickning power
Giues life and birth to euery plant and flower,
The strength and seruor of whose pregnant ray,
Buds euery branche and blossomes euery spray;
As the firm sap the yeerely course affyg'nde
From the full roote, doth swell the plenteous rynde,
The vitall spirits long nourisht at the harte,
Flye with fresh fire, to each exterior parte:
Which stirres desire in hot and youthfull bloods;
To breath their deare thoughts to the listning woods. 10
With those light flocks the garish fieldes frequent,
This frolick season luckylic I went,
And as the rest did, did I franckly too,
„Least is he mark'd, that doth as most men doo.
But whether by some casuall defect,
All Flowers a like the time did not respect:
Some whose new Rootes ne're saw a former May,
Floorish now sayre, those withered quite away,
Into my thoughts that incidently brings
Th'inconstant passage of all worldly things. 20

B

The

The Owle.

The rarest worke whereat we wonder long,
Obscur'd by time that enuie could not wrong.
And what in life can mortall man desier,
That scarcely comm'n, but quickly doth retier?
The Monarchies had time to grow to head,
And at the height their conquered honors fled:
And by their wane those latter kingdoms rose,
That had their age to winne, their howers to lose,
Which with much sorrow brought into my minde,
Their wretched soules so ignorantly blinde, 30
(When euen the great'st things in the world vnstable)
Clyme but to fall, and damned for a bable.

Whil'st thus my thoughts were strongly entertain'd
The greatest lampe of heauen his height had gayn'd;
Seeking some shade might lend content to me,
Loe neere at hand I spy'd a goodly tree;
Vnder the xtenture of whose lordly armes,
The small Birds warbled their harmonious charmes.
Where sitting downe to coole the burning heate,
Through the moyst pores euap'rating by sweate, 40
Yeelding my pleas'd thought to content (by chance)
Vpon a suddaine drop't into a trance,
Wherein me thought some God or power diuine
Did my cleere knowledge wondrously refine.
For that amongst those sundry varying notes,
Which the Birds sent from their Melodious throats,

Each

The Owle.

Each Siluan sound I truely vnderstood,
Become a perfect Linguist of the Wood:
Their flight, their song, and euery other signe,
By which the world did anciently deuine.
As the old *Tuskans* in that skill profound,
Which first great *Car*, and wise *Tyresias* found,
To me bequeath'd their knowledge to discry
The depth and secrets of their Augury.
One I could heare appoynting with his sweeting,
A place conuenient for their secret meeting.
Others, when Winter shortly should declyne,
How they would couple at Saint *Valentine*.
Some other Birds that of their Loues forsaken,
To the close deserts had themselues betaken,
And in the darke Groaues where they made abroad,
Sang many a sad and mournfull *Palinod*.
And euery Bird shew'd in his proper kinde,
What vertue, nature had to him assignde.
The pretty *Turtle*, and the kissing *Doue*,
Their faiths in Wedlock, and chaste nuptiall Loue:
The *Hens* (to women) sanctitie expresse,
Hallowing their Egges: the *Swallow* cleynesse,
Sweetning her nest, and purging it of dong,
And euery hower is picking of her yong.
The *Herne* by soaring shewes tempestuous showers,
The Princely Cocke distinguisheth the howers.

Diuine
by Bir

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couple

The Owle.

The Kye his traine him guiding in the aire,
Prescribes the helme, instructing how to steere.
The Crane to labour, fearing some rough flawe,
With sand and grauell burthening his crowe.
Noted by man, which by the same did finde
To ballast Shippes for steddines in winde.
And by the forme and order in his flight,
To march in warre, and taught to watch by night.
The first of house that ere did groundsell lay,
Which then was homely of rude lome and clay;
Learn'd of the *Martin*, *Philomel* in spring,
Teaching by art her little one to sing;
By whose cleere voyce sweet musicke first was found,
Before *Amphyon* euer knew a sound.
Couering with Mousse the deade vncloused eye:
The little *Red-breast* teacheth charitye.
So many that in sundry things excell,
Time scarce could serue their properties to tell. 90
I cannot judge if it the place should bee,
That should present this pretty dreame to mee,
That neare the Eaves and shelter of a sticke
(Set to support it) at a *Beeches* backe
In a stub'd Tree with *Iuy* over-growne,
On whom the Sunne had scarcely euer shone:
A broad-Fac'd Creature, hanging of the wing,
Was set to sleepe whil'st every Bird did sing.

His

The Owle.

His drowſy head ſtill leaning on his breſt,
For all the ſweet tunes *Philomel* expreſt: 100
No ſigne of joy did in his lookes appeere,
Or euer mou'd his melancholly cheere.
Aſcallaphus that brought into my hed,
In *Ouids* changes *Metamorphiſed*,
Or very like: but him I read aright,
Solemne of lookes as he was ſlowe of ſight;
And to aſſure me that it was the ſame;
The Birds about him ſtrangely wondrous came.
Fye, quoth the *Lennet* tripping on the ſpray;
Rowſe thee thou ſluggiſh Bird this mirthfull May, 110
For ſhame, come forth and leaue thy Luſkye neſt,
And haunt theſe Forreſts brauely as the beſt:
Take thy delight in yonder goodly Tree,
Where the ſweet *Merle* and warbling *Mavis* bee.
Next, quoth the *Titmauſe* which at hand did ſitt,
Shake off this moody melancholy ſitt. (trauell
See the ſmall brooke as through theſe groues they
Sporting for joy vpon the Siluer grauell,
Mocke the ſweet notes the neighboring *Siluan*s ſing,
With the ſmooth cadence of their murmuring. 120
Each Bee with Hony laden to the thye,
From Palme to Palme (as careleſſly they flye)
Catch the ſoft winde, and him his courſe bereaues,
To ſtay and dally with th' inamored leaues.

Aſcallaphus in
Bubon

The Owle.

This while the *Owle*, which wel himself could beare,
That to their short speech lent a listning eare:
Begins at length to rowse him in the Beech,
And to the rest thus frames his reuerend speech.

O all you feathered *Quintessences* of nature,
That mighty power distinguish'd euery creature;
Gauē seuerall vses vnto euery one:
As seuerall feeds, or things that liue vpon;
Some as the *Larke* that takes delight to build
Farre from resort amid the Vastie field.
The *Pellican* in deserts farre abroad,
Her deare-lou'd issue safely doth vnload.
The *Sparrow* and the *Robin* agen,
To liue neare to the Mansion place of men;
And nature wisely which hath each thing taught,
This place best fitting my content fore-thought,
Though not presuming in the stately Trees,
Yet where fore-sight lesse threatning danger fees,
The tempest thrilling from the troubled ayre,
Strikes not the shrub the place of my repayre.
The Fowlers snares in Ambush neuer lay'd
T'intrap my steps which often you betrayd.
A silent sleepe my gentle tellow Birds,
By day, a calme of sweet content affords;
By night I tower the heauen, deuoy'd of feare,
Nor dread the *Griphon* to surprise me theare.

And

The Owle.

And into many a secret place I peep,
And see strange things whilst you securely sleep.
Wonder not Birds although my heauie eies,
By daie seeme dim to see these vanities.

„Happie's that fight the secret'st things can spye,

„By seeming blinde vnto communitie;

„And blest are they that to their owne content,

„See that by night that some by day repent.

Did not mine eyes seeme dim to others sight,

Without suspect they could not see so right,

„O fillie creatures, happie is the state,

„That wayes not pittie, nor respecteth hate:

„Better's that place though homely and obscure,

„Where we repose in safety and secure,

Then where great Birds with Lordly tallants seaze

Not what they ought, but what their fancies please:

And by their power preuailing in this sorte,

To rob the poore, account it but a sporte:

Therefore of two I chose the lesser euill,

„Better sit still then rise to meet the Deuill.

Thus the poore Owle vnhabily could preach:

Some that came neere in compasse of his reach,

Taking this *Item* with a generall care,

„(A guilty conscience feelles continuall feare,)

Soone to their sorrow secretly do finde,

„Some that had winck'd not altogether blinde.

And

Calius:
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men, &c.

Eraf. C
plus lice
quam p
est, &c.

The Owle.

And finding now which they before had heard,
„ Wisdome not all, in euery garish Bird,
Shrewdly suspect that breuyting by night,
Vnder pretence that he was ill of sight, 147
Slylie had seene which secretly not kept,
Simply they wak'd; he subtilly had slept;
The enuious Crow that is so full of spight,
The hatefull Buzzard, and the rauenous Kye.
The greedy Rauen that for death doth call,
Spoyling poore Lambs as from their Dams they fall,
That picketh out the dying creatures eye;
The theemish Dove, and the dissembling Pye,
That onely liue vpon the poorers spoyle, 159
That feede on Dung-hilles by the loathsome soyle.
The Wood-pecker whose hardned beake hath broke,
And pearc'd the hart of many a solid Oke.
That where the Kingly Eagle went to pray
In the calme shade in heate of Summers day;
Of thousand of faire Trees there stands not one
For him to pearch or set his foote vpon.
And now they see they safely had him here,
T'eschew th'effect of euery future feare.
Vpon the suddaine all these murderous fowle,
Fasten together on the harmeles Owle. 200
The cruell Kye because his clawes were keene,
Vpon his broad-face wreacks his angry teene.

His

The Owle.

His weasant next the rauenous *Rauen* plyes,
The *Pye* and *Buzzard* tugging at his eyes.
The *Crow* is digging at his brest amaine;
The sharp-nebd *Hecco* stabbing at his brayne,
That had the *Falcon* not by chance bene neere,
That lou'd the *Owle* and held him onely deere;
Come to his rescue at the present tyde,
The honest *Owle* vndoubtedly had dyde. 210
And whilst the gentle Bird doth yet persue,
The ryot done by this rebellious crue,
The lesser Birds that keep the lower spring,
There-at much greeue with wofull murmuring,
Yet wanting power to remedy his wrongs,
Who tooke their liues, restrained not thir tongues:
The *Larke*, the *Lenner*, and the gentler sorte,
Those sweete Musitions, with whose shrill reporte,
The siceles woods, and the obdurate rocke,
Haue oft bene moou'd, the warbling *Throste* Cocke, 220
The *Ousell*, and the *Nightingale* among
That charmes the night calme by her powerfull song,
In *Phæbus* Lawrell that do take delight,
Whom Ioues fearece thunder hath no power to smite.
Iustice say they, ah whether art thou fled?
Or this vyle world, hast thou abandoned?
O why fayre vertue wer't thou made in vaine?
Freedome is lost and libertie is flaine:

C

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of the F
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Owle.
PLIN

The Owle.

groo

Whylst some whose power restrained not their rage,
Loudly exclaime vpon the enuious age, 230
That rockes for pittie doe resume them eares,
The earth so wette with plentie of their teares.
But thus it haps in heat of all these things,
„ As Kings rule Realms, God rules the harts of Kings.

The Princely Eagle leauing his abode,
Was from his Court stolne secretly abroad,
And from the couert, closely where he stood,
To finde how things were censur'd in the wood;
Farre in the thickets might a chattring heare,
To which soone lending an officious care, 240
With a still flight his easie course doth make
Towards where the sound he perfectly doth take.
At euery stroke (with his Imperiall wings)
The gentle ayre vnto his feathers clings;
And through his soft and callow downe doth flowe,
As loath so soone his presence to forgoe,
And being at last arryued at the place
Where the poore Owle in miserable case
(For whom much sorrowe euery where was heard)
Sadly bemoan'd of many a helples Bird. 250
But when this Princely Iouial Foule they sawe,
As now deliu' red from their former awe:
Each little creature lifted vp a wing,
With *Aue Caesar* to their soueraigne King.

Who

The Owle.

Southey's poem

Who seeing the Owle thus miserable forlorne,
Spoyl'd of his feathers, mangled, scratcht and torne:
Wil'd him his name and quality to shewe,
How and wherefore he suffred all this woe:
Which the Owle hearing, taking hart thereby,
Though somewhat daunted with his pearcing eye, ²⁶⁰
(With a deep sigh) my soueraigne Leidge, quoth he,
Though now thus poore and wretched as you see,
Athens sometime the *Muses* Nurserie,
The source of Science and Philosophie,
Allow'd me freedome in her learned Bowers,
Where I was set in the *Cecropian* towers;
Armed *Bellona* (Goddesse of the field)
Honor'd my Portraict in her war-like Shield
And for my studie (of all other Fowle)
To wise *Minerva* chalenged the Owle. ²⁷⁰
For which, those graue and still-autentique Sages
Which sought for knowledge in those golden ages,
Of whom we hold the science that we haue;
For wisdom, me their *Heroglifique* gaue.
The fruitfull *Ceres* to great *Saturn* borne,
That first with Sickle cropt the rip'ning Corne,
That bore the swartye *Acheron*, whose birth
Scarsely yet perfect, loathing of the earth,
And flying all communitie with men,
Thrust his blacke head into the *Stigian* fen; ²⁸⁰

The Owle.

Where the Nymph *Orphne* in th' infernall shade,
As in his streamie she carelesly did wade:
The flood Imbracing craftily beguilde,
By whom soone after she conceau'd with childe,
Of her deare sonne *Ascallaphus*, whose youth
So cherish'd Iustice, and respected truth;
As to the Gods he faithfully did tell,
The tasted fruit by *Proserpine* in hell:
Which an offence imagined so fowle,
Ceres transform'd into the harmeles Owle. 290
To our disgrace though it be vrg'd by some,
Our harmeles kinde to Creet doth neuer come;
The Cretians euer lyars, nor come we thether,
For truth and falshood cannot liue together.
And those that spurne at our contented state,
With Viperous enuie and degenerate hate;
Striue to produce vs from that Lesbian bed,
Where with blinde lust the fleshly letcher led
On his owne childe, vnnaturally to praye,
(For that fowle fact) transform'd *Nyctimene*, 300
But seldome seene vnto the publique eye,
The shreeking *Litch-Owle* that doth neuer crye,
But boding death and quick her selfe interres,
In darksome graues and hollow sepulchers.
Thus much, my Soueraigne, whence my fathers came.
Now for the cause of this my present shame,

The Owle.

„ Few words may serue a mischiefe to vnfolde,
„ For in short speech long sorrow may be tolde.
But for my freedome that I vs'd of late,
To lanch th'infection of a poysoned state, 310
Wherein my free and vncorrupted tongue,
Lightly gaue taste of their injurious wrong.
The *Kyte*, the *Crow*, and all the Birds of pray,
That thy Liedge people hauock night and day;
Rushing vpon me, and with foule despight,
Thus haue they drest me in this piteous plight.

The *Eagle* now a serious eare that lent,
To the religious and deuout intent,
Of the good *Owle*, whom too injurious fate
Had thus rewarded; doth commiserate 320
The poore distressed Bird, hoping to heare
What all the rest through negligence or feare,
Smothred in silence, and buried still,
Couering the sore of many a festred ill,
Not onely grants him libertie of speech,
But further dayning kindly to beseech,
The vertuous Bird no longer to refraine:
Who thus emboldned by his Soueraigne,
At length his silence resolutely brake,
And thus the *Eagles* majestie be-spake. 330

Mightie, said he, though my plaine homely words,
Haue not that grace that elegance affoord.

The Owle.

Truth of it selfe is of sufficient worth,
That needs no glosse of art to set it forth.
These hoary plumes like mosse vpon that Oake,
By seeing much, yet suffering more I tooke.
Long haue I seene the worlds vnconstant change,
Ioy mooues not me, affliction is not strange.
I care not for contempt, I seek not fame,
Knowledge I loue, and glory in the same. 340
Th'ambitious judgement feat I neuer sought,
Where God is folde for Coyne, the poore for nought.
I am a helples Bird, a harmles wretch,
Wanting the Power that needfull is to teach.
Yet care of your great good and generall weale,
Vnlocks my tongue, and with a feruent zeale
Breakes through my lips which otherwise were pent
To that seuer Graue *Samnites* document.
I know before my harmles Tale be tolde,
The gripple Vulture argues me too bolde. 350
The *Cormorant* (whome spoyle cannot suffice)
Stickes not to charge and slander me with lyes.
The *Parrots* taxe me to be vainly proud,
And all crye shame the Owle should be allow'd,
Which with this *Axiome* doth them all confute,
„When Kings bid speake, what subject can be mute?
The latest winter that fore-went our prime,
O mighty Prince, vpon a certaine time

I got

The Owle.

I got into thy Pallace on a night,
There to reuiue my melancholy spright, 360
And there (for darknes) wayting all alone,
To view (by night) what Lords by day looke on,
Where I beheld so many Candles light,
As they had mock'd the Tapers of the night.
Where for it grew vpon the time of rest,
And many great sinceritie profest,
Expecting prayer should presently proceed;
To aske forgiuenes for the dayes misdeed,
There in soft Downe the liquerous Sparrow sat,
Pamper'd with meates, proud, insolent and fat. 370
His Drugs, his drinks, and sirrops doth apply,
To heat his blood and quicken luxury;
Which by his billing female was imbrac'd,
Clasping her wings about his wanton waste.
O God thought I, what's heere? by light within,
Where some in darknes should haue fear'd to fin.
The *Cormorant* set closely to deuise
How he might compasse strange Monopolies.
The gawdy *Gold-finch* and his courtly mate,
The iolly *Bunting* power-full in the state, 380
Quickly agreed and but a little stick;
To share a thousand for a Bishoprick,
And scramble vp some feathers from the *Larke*;
What though a Pastor and a learned Clarke?

And

The Owle.

And for his reuerence though he weare a Cowle,
Yet at his entrance he must pay them towle.
I saw a *Buzzard* scorning of the blacke,
That but of late did cloath his needy backe
With Ostridge feathers had adorn'd his crest,
As he were bred a *Faulcon* at the least. 390
Thus strouts he daily in his borrowed plume
And but for shame he bouldly durst presume,
With princely Eglets to compare his sight:
Not the proud *Iris* in her coullers dight,
Could with this base *Kyte* equally compare.
What Fowle before him stood not humbly bare?
No lesse then Eords attending euerie beck,
At his commaund his betters brooke his check.
But O my Liedge, the Birds of Noble race,
Knowe whence he is and who affoords him grace, 400
And inlie greeue to see a seruile mate,
Crept vp by fauour to out-braue a State.
The poore Implumed Birds that by offence,
Or some disgrace haue lost preheminance:
Can poynt and say, this Feather once was mine:
Some winck, some would, some greeue, & some repine
Besides all this, I saw a Bird did scower,
A Serpents teeth that daily did deuoure
Widdowes and Orphanes, yet th'Egyptian Sawes,
Commend this Bird for clensing Serpents lawes. 410

For

The Owle.

Troch
AnisP

For the base Trochyle thinketh it no paine,
To scowre vile Carion for a fauorie gaine.
When soone I sawe about the Serpents nest,
Whil st this slaue Bird his nastie grynders drest.
A thousand little Flyes, as many Birds,
Of labouring Bees, a thousand thousand heards,
A thousand fundry Foule, that strangely carp
And curse that beake that made his goomes so sharp.
Yet in this base Bird I might well discry,
The prosperous frute of thriuing Policy. 420
Casting mine eye and looking through a glasse,
I saw a Gos-hawke (that in state did passe)
That by faire showes did mens affections feelee,
Golde (his attendant) alwaies at his heele.
Whole Mannors did him reuerence as he staid,
Whose name (if written) could possession plead
In any Lordship that adjoynd his:
Lawe was his vassall, he and purchase kis.
Zeale was his foole, and Learning was his ieaster,
Pride was his page, and Gluttony his taster. 430
A thousand suters wayted at his haud,
Some call'd his honor Patrone of the Land;
The sole commaunder of the Common-weale,
And vnto him they humbly all appeale.
When in a Closset strangely I beheld,
That was adjoyning to a pleasant field,

D

How

The Owle.

How euery suter when he was retyr'd
Bought out his peace, or his promotion hy'rd;
Yet what he woune with curles was rewarded,
When the poore Birds for bribes alone regarded. 448
To th' secret of all secrets when I came,
Hauing mine eyes euen glewd with grieve and shame.
I tell not how the Vulture fate apart,
Spending the blood and marrow of his hart,
And by all meanes his facultyes t'apply,
To taynt the *Phoenix* by his surquedry,
That of her kinde had she bene more then one,
(Parent and Infant to her selfe alone)
This heauenly Bird (in touching their defame)
Had had her purple soyled with their shame. 450
And for the *Turtle* would not be vnchaste,
Her did they banish to the barren waste.
I dare not say how euery sorte were serched,
Nor dare I tell how Auarice was perched
Vnder the pillow of the grauest head,
(That freedome with the golden world is dead)
How age had cast off a religious life,
Humor of late become Opinions wife.
Counsaile secure, nor Companies with care,
The wit that woundeth zeale, counterare. 460
But whither wandreth my hye rauish't Muse?
O pardon Leidge, the feirce exclames I vse;

And

Claudian
le Phœ-
nice.

The Owle.

And let my Barque (through gales of your good grace
Through these rough Seas) bear sayle a little space.

Scarfe had these words found vtrance through my
But therewithall a pratling Parrot skips (lips

About the priuate lodging of his Peeres,

His eyes were watchfull, open were his eares.

He had a tongue for euery language fit,

A cheuerell Conscience, and a searching wit. 490

Comming in haste as he had crost the Mayne,

And brought some strange intelligence from Spayne,

Yet euen at mid-night (for the Rogue was poore)

I found him knocking at a great mans doore;

And where of course the wise are turnd away,

His errand brooks no dilatorie stay,

But presently conducted (by a light)

Into a Chamber very richly dight,

Where fate the Vulture with a dreadfull frowne,

Proud and ambitious, gaping for renowne: 480

His talents red with blood of murdered foules,

His full eye quickly euery way controles.

Which when this Parrot stedfastly beheld,

His feathers bristled and his stomack sweld;

And to the Vulture openeth where he sat,

(Whose eares attentiuely listning still thereat)

The state and hauiour of each priuate man,

Layd out for searching Auarice to scan.

D 2

Whereby

The Owle.

Whereby strict rule and subtilties in art,
Such traps are set, as not a man can start. 490
And where th' offenders maintenance was great,
Their working heads they busily doe beat,
By some strange quiddit or some wrested clause,
To finde him guiltie of the breach of lawes,
That he this present injury to shift,
To buye his owne, accounts a Princely guilt.
And for a cloake to their corrupt Decrees,
The Vulture with this subtile Bird agrees;
That they that thus conuicted are aparte,
Shall be surpriz'd by policy and arte. 500
Then picke they forth such theeues as hate the light,
The black-ey'd Bat (the watch-man of the night)
That to each priuate family can prie,
And the least slip can easily discerie;
And since his Conscience is both loose and large,
Is onely set to vnder-goe this charge;
Adrest to drinke of euery priuate Cup,
And not a word slips but he takes it vp.
To minister occasion of discourse, 509
And ther-with-all, some dangerous Theame in-force,
To vrge a doubtfull speech vnto the worst,
To broach newe treasons and disclose them first;
Wher-by him-selke still cleeres: and vn-awares
Intraps the Foule, vnskilfull of these snares.

And

The Owle.

And (againſt Law) he beares his Lords Protection,
As a fit meane and by the States direction.

O worthy Birds, preuent this ill in time,
And ſuffer not this rau'nous *Bar* to climbe;
That is occaſion of the beſts offence,
The brat of ryot and of indigence, 520
The moath and canker of the Common-weale,
Bred by corruption to diſquiet zeale.

Holla thou wandring Infant of my brayne,
Whither thus ſling'ſt thou? yet diuert thy ſtrayne;
Returne we backe vnto our former gate,
From which a little we digreſt of late,
And leaue this monſter beating of his head,
The honeſt *Owle* hath quickly ſtroke him dead.
And forth againe the *Parrot* let vs finde,
That winning credit, ſo the world doth blinde, 530
Vnder protection of ſo dread a hand,
Spoyles families and ranſacketh thy land.
The *Pellican* that by his fathers teaching,
Hath with deuout zeale ſollow'd whoſome preaching
That rent his boſome and inforc'd his tounge,
To teach his tender and beloued young.
When now theſe fauters of all vyle abuſe
Haue found a ſtand where they may note his uſe,
How father-like he giues affliction bread,
Conuerting ſoules; through blind-ſolde error led. 540

The Owle.

The naked Orphan in his bosome wraps,
With the poore Widowe doth bewaile her haps;
And neuer reaps his plenteous field so cleane,
But leaues his haruest that the poore may gleane;
Steps in this false spye, this promoting wretch,
Closely betrayes him that he giues to each:
And for his deeds of charitie and grace,
Roots vp his godly Hospitable place.

he Al-
tras.

Most like to that sharp-sighted *Alcatras*,
That beats the aire about the liquid glasse: 550
The New-worlds Bird, that proud Emperious fowle,
Whose dreadfull presence frights the harmeles *Owle*:
That on the Land not onely workes his wish,
But on the *Ocean* kills the flying fish.
Which since the *Owle* hath truely done his arrant,
O Princely *Eagle* looke vnto this tyrant:
But if my words thou wilfully impung,
Thy peacefull Empyre that hath flourish'd long,
Head-long at length shall to confusion runne;
As was this great globe ere the world begunne: 560
When in an huge heape and vnweldie masse,
This All was shut and nature smothered was.
And in this Lumpe and Chaos out of frame,
The contraries conuers'd and one became,
Strictly together th'Elements were clasp'd,
And in their rough hands one the other grasp'd:

That

The Owle.

That each did others qualitie deface,
Beautie was buried, light could finde no place.
But when th'al-seeing Soueraigne did disperse,
Each to his place vpon the vniuerse, 570
To his owne region and his contrarie;
Enuy'd his place, impungn'd his qualitie.
Fyer, Aire, Earth, Water, in their Mansion fate,
By that great God to them appropriate.
All is compos'd within this goodly roome;
A perfect shape this Embryon is become;
Which thus disseuered by their friendly jarres,
Contriue the worlds continuance by their warres.
So in confusion members are inclosd,
To frame a state if orderly dispos'd: 580
For to the proud maleuolent aspect,
Of angry *Saturne* that would all direct,
The long exiled but Imperious Ioue,
When for his regal Soueraigntie he stroue,
With god-like state and presence of a King;
Calmes *Saturnes* rage, his furie limiting.

But leaue we these vnto their owne decay,
Other occasions hasten vs away:
Let Princes viewe what their poore subjects trye;
„Blinde is that sight, that's with anothers eye; 590
It is full time that we should get vs hence,
O mightie Soueraigne Oceans of offence,

Stand

The Owle.

Stand here opposed in my passing by;
When in a chamber nere thy Majestie
A jetting *Iaye* accomplished and braue,
That well could speake, well could him-selſe behaue;
His Congeis Courtly, his demeanor rare,
As strangely fashion'd as his clothes he ware;
Which could each man with complement ſalute,
And to the *Wood-Cocke* fram'd a ſpeciall ſute. 600
Who him imbracing like a braineles ſoole,
Deſir'd him ſit, commaunding him a ſtoole.
The jolly *Iaye* thus graced by a Peere,
Pluckes vp his ſpirits, and with a formall cheere
Breakes ther-with-all into moſt ſtrange reportes,
Of Flemmiſh newes, ſurpriſing Townes and Fortes.
Of troubles rais'd in France againſt the King,
Spaniſh Armadoes and embattailing,
Proteſting method in Intelligence
To be a thing of mightie conſequence; 610
And pawnes his ſoule, he can deuife a way,
Which put in acte, the Leaguers looſe the day.
To frame a Bridge of Bowe-ſtring o're the *Rhine*,
Supplant the *Alps* and lay them ſmooth and plaine.
And that if all the Princes of the North,
Will with an armye-Royall ſet him forth,
Before the yeare expyr'd that is to come,
Comins. He will with *Barbon* new be-leaguer Rome.

Then

The Owle .

Then of his knowledge in the Cabalist,
And what pertaines vnto an Exorcist. 620
Then of *Phylacters* what their vertue be,
Homers Nepenthe and of his degree;
Each seuerall vse in practique what it is;
How much he wants that doth these secrets misse,
And by some little piller in the place,
To giue some Window or some Chymnie grace,
Now to proportion presently doth run,
And talkes of the Colloßus of the Sun;
Of Columnnes the *Diameters* doth tell,
Euen from the Base vnto the Capitell. 630
And by the Rooße he something doth allude,
And will demonstrate of the Magnitude.
And what is all this from his addle pate,
But like a *Starling* that is taught to prate?
And with a lisping garbe (this most rare man)
Speakes *French, Dutch, Spanish, and Italian.*
No day doth passe, he doth his compasse misse,
To send to that Lord, or to visit this;
And kissing of his clawe, his Cox-combe bare,
Is come to see how their good graces fare. 640
And presently vnto their face reports,
Their rare perfections woundred at in Courts;
Scratching the Idiot by his itching eares;
Heauens spit downe vengeance or dissolue in teares,
E And

The Owle.

The Bird And send the *Ibis* to repulse our shame,
bis, a de- To driue these *Locusts* to whence first they came.
royer of Woe to these slaues whose shape the deuill tooke,
the locust.
LINIE. To tempt the holy *Esay* at his booke.

O morall *Mantuan*, liue thy verses long,
Honor attend thee and thy reuerend Song. 650
Who seekes for truth (say'st thou) must tread the path
Of the sweet priuate life, which enuies wrath,
Which poy's ned tongues, which vaine affected praise
Can-not by scorne suppress, by flattery raise.
For Adulation, but if search be made,
His daily Mansion and his vsuall trade,
Is in the Monarch's Court, in Princes Halles,
Where Godly zeale he by contempt inthralls.
There calles he euill good, the good tearmes euill,
And makes a Saint of an incarnate deuill. 660
These boldly censure and dare set at nought,
The noblest wit, the most Heroique thought.
This Carion *Iaye* approaching to the spring
Where the sweet *Muses* wont to sit and sing,
With filthy ordure so the same defyl'd,
As they from thence are vtterly exyl'd.
Banish their issue, from whose Sacred rage
Floues the full glory of each plentious age.
Still with the Prophets chalenging their parts,
The sweet Companions of the Liberall Artes. 670

Those

The Owle.

Those rare *Promethij* fetching fire from Heauen
To whom the functions of the Gods are giuen,
Rayning fraile dust with their redoubled flame,
Mounted with Hymnes vpon the wings of Fan
Ordayn'd by nature (Truch-men for the great,
To fire their Noble harts with glorious heat.
You Sun-bred Ayerie, whose immortall birth
Beares you aloft beyond the sight of earth,
The heauen-tuch'd feathers of whose sprightly wings,
Strikes (from aboue) the Pallaces of Kings,
By how much neerer you ascend the Skye,
Do lessen still to euery mortall eye;
Who in this time contemptfull greatnes late
Scorn'd and disgrac'd which earst renown'd her state.
O basterd mindes vnto this vylenes brought,
To loath the meanes which first your honors wrought
But who their great profession can protect,
That rob them selues of their owne due respect?
For they whose mindes should be exhal'd and hye,
As free and noble as cleere Poesye,
In the slight fauour of some Lord to come,
Basely do crouch to his atrending grome.
Immortall guift that art not bought with golde!
That thou to peasants should be safely solde!
And thus euen cloy'd with busines of the Court,
To neighbour Groues inuyting my resort,

The Owle.

Where I suppos'd the *solitarie Owle*
Might liue secure vnseene of any Fowle;
Loe in a valley peopled thick with trees,
Where the soft day continuall Euening sees, 700
Where in the moyst and melancholy shade,
The grasse growes rancke, but yeeldes a bitter blade,
I found a poore *Crane* sitting all alone,
That from his brest sent many a throbbing grone;
Groueling he lay, that sometime stood vpright;
Maim'd of his joynts in manie a doubtfull fight.
His Ashie coate that bore a glosse so faire,
So often kis'd of the enamored aire;
Worne all to ragges and fretted so with rust,
That with his feete he trod it in the dust: 710
And wanting strength to beare him to the springs,
The spyders woue their webbs euen in his wings:
And in his traine their filmie netting cast,
He eate not wormes, wormes eate on him so fast.
His wakefull eies that in proud foes despight,
Had watch'd the walles in many a Winters night,
And neuer winck'd nor from their object fled,
When heauens dread thunder ratled ore his head,
Now couered ouer with dimme cloudy kelles,
And shruncken vp into their slymie shelles. 720
Poore Bird that striuing to bemoane thy plight,
I cannot do thy miseries their right;

Per-

The Owle.

Perceiuing well he found me where I stood;
And he alone thus poorely in the Wood:
To him I stept, desiring him to shoue
The cause of his calamitie and woe.
Nights-Bird (quoth he) what mak'st thou in this place
To view my wretched miserable case?
Ill Orators are aged men at Armes,
That wont to wreake and not bewayle their harmes:
And repitition where there wants reliefe,
In less'ning sorrow, but redoubleth greefe.
Seauen sundrie Barrails seru'd I in the field,
Against the *Pigmies*, in whose battered shield,
My prowesse stands apparantly exprest;
Besides these scarres vpon my manly breast,
Along the Mid-land coast my troupes I led,
And *Affrickes* pride with feate astonish'd;
And mayn'd I was of this decrepit wing,
When as the fowle from the Proponticke spring,
Fild all Th' Aegean with their stemming ores,
And made the Iles euen tremble from the shores.
I saw when from the *Adriaticke* seas;
The crosse-adoring Fowles to *Europes* praise;
Before *Lepanto* and *Moraea* fought, (wrought
Where heauen by winde, earths wonder strangely
Weary at length and trusting to my worth,
I tooke my flight into the happie North:

The Sea
fro Hell
spont to
Bosphor
Thraci

The Owle.

Where nobly bred as I was well ally'd,
I hop'd to haue my fortune there supply'd, 75^o
But there arry'd, disgrace was all my gayne,
Experience scorn'd of euery fouruye swayne.
Other had got for which I long did serue,
Still fed with wordes whil'st I with wants did sterue.
Hauing small meanes but yet a mighty hart,
How ere in fame, nor honour'd for desert,
That small I had, I forced was to gage,
To cure my wounds and to sustaine mine age;
Whil'st those that scarce did ere beholde a foe,
Exult and triumph in my ouerthrowe. 76^o
And seeing in vayne with miserie I stroue,
Retyr'd me to this solitarie Groue;
Where in dispayre (euen loathing of my breath)
I long to dwell in the colde armes of death.

Heere sank downe in a fount and could no more,
And I returne from whence I came before.

Where by the way the countrie Rooke deplor'd,
The grip and hunger of this rauinous Lord.

The cruell Castrell which with deuilish claws,
Scratcheth out of the miserable jawes 77^o

Of the poore tennant, to his ruyne bent,
Raysing new Fynes, redoubling auncient rent;
By strong inclosure of olde Common land,
Rackes the deare sweate from his laborious hand,

Whil'st

The Owle.

Whil'ft he that digs for breath out of the stones,
Cracks his stiffe Sinewes and consumes his bones;
Yet forc'd to reape continually with strife,
Snarling contention feeding on his life.
Yet hoping Fortune bettered by his heys,
He hath their loue, his hate made onely theirs; 780
Laboring to keepe him in his quiet state,
When enuie doth his gathered Manors threat:
And being fauored of some higher Peere,
Who not for Loue, inforcing by his feare,
Which by their Clownish industrie and art,
Now to the Court reduce him from the Cart,
With slight prouision that defrayes his charge,
Whil'ft with his graine he ballast manie a Barge;
And so his gripple Auarice he serue,
What reckes this rancke-hinde if his Countrie sterue? 790
„Hell on that wealth is purchased with shame,
Gold in the Trunck, and in the graue defame:
Yet his clawes blunt and when he can no more,
The needie Rooke is turn'd out of the doore.
And lastly doth his wretchednes bewayle,
A bond-slaue to the miserable Iayle.

Thus wearied with the sight of worldly crimes,
The wane of kingdomes, and the change of times;
Betooke my selfe by searching to espye,
What sinnes in secrete did in Cities lye: 800

For

The Owle.

For there I deem'd where law had chiefest force;
Strongly to limmit euery lewder course,
Things turn'd to nature and disdain'd excesse,
That plaguy foe to humaine happines.
And as I went (with busie search about)
Casting by cunning how to finde them out,
I found the *Fesant* that the *Hauke* doth feare,
Seeking for safetie bred his Aerye there:
Yet is accus'd through close informing hate,
By lawles lending to offend the state. 810
Who being Rich, and louing coyne and ease,
Still buyldeth lowe for feare he should displease,
Yet the Bald-*Buzzard* being appoynted Iudge,
To this base, muddy, miserable drudge:
A payre of young ones taking from his nest,
And leaues this fearefull Recreant the rest,
Who giues him thanks his goodnes would so doe,
Might take the Arye and the old one too.
He liued best that most liu'd out of sight:
I dare not say that Birds were all vpright; 820
For some had golden Beaks but brazen clawes,
That held the guildes to minister their lawes:
The *Castrell* for possession of his heyre,
Is by the *Ringtaylor* offered woundrous faire,
To haue a match betwixt their goodly breed,
T'increase their lands, and raise their happie seed.

But

The Owle.

But the coye *Castrel* turnes it to a mocke,
And scorne to match in his ignoble stocke;
For which the *Ring-tayle* by a secret plot,
Subornes the *Starling*, which hath closely got
To be the Broker, flylie to seduce
The *Castrels* Heyre, by giuing thriftlesse vse.
And in strong Statutes to inthrall him so,
To lyme him sure which way so ere he goe.
For this young Foule (drawne from his fathers eye)
Will with the fond world swimme in vanitye.
The subtil *Ring-tayle* neuer thus doth leaue,
Till he the *Castrel* cunningly deceiue.
And caught this young one in the Cities snare,
Deuoures his Mannors ere he be aware. 840
Mongst which the *Dame* (by giuing of a bribe)
Became a Clerke amongst the learned Tribe;
That being a Bankerout, a dis-honest detter,
Can get his liuing onely by the letter,
Whil'st Arts goe beg, and in a seruile weed,
Are made the slaues of penurie and need.
The *Goose* exyled, humbly doth appeale
To all the Birds, professing faith and zeale.
And though he proueth by the Roman book,
What care to keep the Capitall he took; 850
Yet is not heard: The *Doue* with-out a gall
Is left forsaken, and contemn'd of all.

F

There

Plutar

Colum
fine fel

The Owle.

There growes such difference and such strange con-
Twixt old decrees, and latter Institutions: (fusions,
Yet being inspyr'd, desisteth not to speake,
To edifie the conscience that is weake,
And by approoued arguments of s owne,
By Scriptures, Fathers, and great writers knowne,
Discouereth their abominable trade,
So that the *Storke* their vmpyre being made, 860
Iudgeth the *Dame* should from the Church be driuen,
To prate in corners, and to Preach by Euen.
And since his art and cunning was so scant,
To haue no Patron but the Ignorant;
And by his doctrine onely teaching fools,
To be exilde and hiss'd out of the Schools.
Hence like the seede *Thebes*-buylder *Cadmus* throwes;
More armed mischiefes suddainly arose:
The *Bitter* brings his action 'gainst the *Quayle*,
And on th'arrest allows him hardly bayle; 870
Because he durst presume amongst the Reeds,
To let his Lemmon where his female breeds.
And Mistris *Titmouse* a neate merrie dame,
With her friend *Vagtaile*, one of speciall name;
Su'de by the *Cucco* in his proper wronge,
For accusation of a sclanderous tongue.
That to the barre his Aduocate doth bring,
That hath by rote the acts of manie a King.

The

The Owle.

The Lawes, the Statutes, and decrees assignde,
Customes so old, as almost out of minde. *860*
A day of hearing good my Lord cries hee,
For Master *Cucco* that retaineth me;
Whom the lewd *VVagayle* basely hath abus'd,
In so vyle tearmes as cannot be excus'd:
The parties likewise present here in Courte,
And tis a case that well deserues reporte.
For which a Iury summoned with speed,
And to the tryall presently proceed.
The Braine-bald *Goote* a formall witleffe *Asse*,
Must now the fore-man on this matter passe: *890*
The Sottish *Dotterill*, ignorant and dull;
And next to him the Mawe-cram'd gluttonous *Gull*.
The Lecherous *Mallard* cal'd vnto the booke,
The squealing *Lapwing*, the ridiculous *Rooke*,
The witles *VVoodcocke*, and his neighbour *Suite*,
That will be hyr'd to passe on euery rite,
With all the rest empagued to wayte:
Which when the Iurie fullie was compleyte,
Cald to the Barre, admitted and alow'd:
Vp start the *Pecocke* insolent and proud; *900*
Of goodly stature and of gracious porte,
In presence of the honorable court.
Thus for the Playntiffe learnedly began,
My Lord (saith he) was neuer worthy man,

The Owle.

So nobly bred and of so high descent,
Of so faire liuely-hood, and so large a rent
As is the *Cucco*, when our plea shall trye,
His losse sustained by their infamye.
First for the worth and honour of his name,
You may the better censure his defame; 910
From mightie Birds descended euery way,
And by his birth (the messenger to May)
His house still loyall, and his Coate as faire,
His fathers tunes he neuer did impaire.
His name and nature do so well agree,
As shoves his blood repurify'd to be.
In fruitfull *Sparta*, it is since now long,
That famous *Greece* tooke notice of his wrong,
When for her wanton and vchaste desire,
A thousand ships stuf'd with reuengefull fire, 920
To *Tenedos* the proud *AEgean* lades,
Whence sprang those high immortal Illiades.
And since the *Roman* from the *Asian* broyles,
Return'd with conquest and victorious spoyles
The *Cuci* heere continually haue beene,
As by their auncient Euidence is seene.
Of Confull *Cuccus*, from whose mightie name,
These liuing *Cuccos* lineally came.
To him, the Auncients, Temples did erect,
Which with great pompe and ornament were deckt.
930 Th'I-

The Owle.

Th' *Italians* call him *Becco* (of a nod)
With all the reuerence that belongs a god.
What though in loue supposed to be vs'd,
What is his vertue need not be excus'd?
The wise man telles (if nature be our guide)
In following her, we sildome slip aside.
And in this Bird (who can her power deny)
If nature fram'd him to communitye?
Then wisely thus considering his profession,
You reuerend Iudges of this lawfull Session: 940
As you are patrones of the righteous cause,
Vouchsafe my clyent judgement. Heere doth pause.

Scarce could the *Peacocke* his conclusion make,
When straight his turne the *Turkie-cocke* doth take
A learned Lawyer (worthy of his gowne)
Of reputation both in Court and towne.
And to the Bench for audience hauing cry'd,
Thus to the *Peacock* learnedly reply'd.
Graue reuerend fathers of the Law (he said)
The matter that our aduersaries plead 950
Is vaine and idle, we the poynt inforce
Against the *Cucco* and his lawles course.
The *Peacock* here a cunning speech hath made,
To helpe his clyent and vpholde his trade;
But strip this maske that doth conceale the cause,
Examine each particuler and clause

The Owle.

Gainst prooffe so poore, so indigent of truth,
The Bastard Curco bringing from his youth,
First lay'd and hatch'd up in a mothers nest:
Such vileness raig'd in his base parents breast, 960
Who since that time they neuer sought for shame,
Nor but their vice dare for his birth-right claime:
The Hedge-Sparrow, (this wicked Bird that bred)
That him so long and diligently fed,
(By her kinde tendance) getting strength and power,
His carefull Nurse doth cruelly deuower:
Base as his byrth, so baser is his trade,
And to the world a bye-word now is made:
No Nation names the Curco but in scorne,
And no man heares him, but he feares the horne: 970
No month regards him but lasciuious Maye,
Wherein whilst youth is dallying with the daye,
His song still tends to vanitie and lust:
Amorous deceits; poligamies in iust.
But to cut off these tedious allegations,
The Lawe commands these publicke defamations,
Be straightly punish'd in the Noblest men.
Why should you spare the cursed Curco then?
Who all his life to lewdnes being bent,
Rightly deserues the publick'st punishment. 980
Then gentle Iurors, good men, and elect,
As you your safeties carefully respect,

The Owle.

If loues sweet Musick and his blisfull cheere,
E're touch'd your harts or mollify'd your eare;
Tender the case, and euer more the wed
Shall praise your Conscience both at borde and bed.

Thus said, he ceas'd, the Iurors step't aside,
Wisely consulting, warily they tryde
The circumstance of euery secret sin;
Thus they return'd and brought their verdict in. 99^o
Cast is the Curro guiltie of the deede,
And for a fine, for his deserued meed,
Alowes to Mistres *Tismouse* for her charge,
That she shall after haue her taylor at large:
And when she Reuels as she did before,
T'exclude the Curro freely out of dore:
And such offenders as they could present,
Likewise ad'udg'd deserued punishment.
The Ringdowne plagu'd with Maggots in the Mawe,
The Woodcocke gets the swelling of the crawe, 100^o
The Crowe with dropsie (whil'st yet liuing) rotts,
The Quayle a Leaper filld with lothsome spotts.
The Buzzard of the Letargie is sicke,
The Kyte with Feuers falleth Lunaticke,
The Epilepsy grew vpon the Iaye,
And of a sweat the Bunting drops away:
When now the Owle that with a vigilant eye,
All these dimensions perfectly could trye:

Fore-

The Owle.

Fore-sawe the perill threatned vnto all,
Apt by their loose credulitie to fall,¹⁰¹⁰
And whose preuention if they did fore-slowe,
Their vnter spoyle immediatly should grow.
My friends (quoth he) looke warily about,
Many the daungers which you are to doubt;
This gallant Oke wherein so oft you play,
Perhaps (at length) your safetie may betray.
And though his shade be delicate and sweet,
His truncke beares lynne that may intrap your feet.
If, fearing what is requisite and fit,
You like my judgement and allowe my wit;¹⁰²⁰
Yours is the good, but if you fondly deeme,
Things be within, as outwardly they seeme;
Head-long runne on, and fall into the snare,
And say, a friend once warn'd you to beware.

Thus spake the Owle, whose talke could not be heard
„ So little, fooles good counsell doth regard,
But thinking frensie him his wits beguilde,
The honest Bird despightfully reuilde.
But marke their end who set aduice at nought,¹⁰²⁹
„ Fooles stil too deare haue sound experience bought;
The Husband-man surueying of his ground,
Mong' st all the trees this Oke had quickly found:
And by all signes and likely-hood of trade,
The Birds therein their nightly roosting made.

And

The Owle.

And by the lyme that issued from the tree,
They all entangled easily might bee.
Taking the same, he spreads it on the sprayes,
And through the thicket closely creepes his wayes.
When the sad arndern shutting in the light,
Wan-sighted *Cynthia* (Lady of the night)
Proudly ascending the ætherial state,
Whence the bright *Phæbus* but dismounted late,
The dull-ey'd euening his moyst vapours threwe,
Strewing the still earth with sweet showers of deawe,
When euery Bird replenished with food,
Clapping his stretch'd wings liuely from the wood,
And on each small branch of this large-lymb'd Oke
Their prettie lodgings carelessly they tooke,
No ill suspecting, fondly vnawares,
Quickly entangled in the Fowlers snares.
Whose mournfull chirping and their chattering cryes,
Incites the *Owle* before his hower to ryse.
And hearing from his melancholy seate,
The Birds them-selues thus wofully to beate,
(The deed discovered with the mornings light)
Flewe from his perch: though greeued at the sight,
Yet with a smile; his wisdome that became,
Which mok'd their folly, though bemoan'd their
Quoth he, you foolish Burgers of the field, (shame,
That in contempt my counsailes lewdly held

G

That,

The Owle.

That, where at late you did but laugh and jeere,
Now to your ruyne plainly doth appeere
The greatest thing you lightly are to lose,
Onely your plumes, that fortune can dispose.
„ Tis yet a comfort in the depth of smart;
„ Enuye but seazeth on the outward part.
„ But present perill in a thing of price,
„ Rather craues action then doth stay aduice.
Therefore to help you will my power assay:
Where-with his wing doth presently display,
And with his clawes, the birds of euery kinde
Pluckes from the lyme, that left their plumes behinde
The little *Robin* featherles and free,
Regreets the *Owle* with many a cap and knee.
The warbling *Maui*s mirth-ful Peans sung,
The *Nightingale* with her melodious tongue
Gaue him such musicke (to declare their thanks)
That springes and riuers dance aboue their banks;
That (with the repurcussion of the Ayre)
Shooke the great *Eagle* sitting in his Chayre:
Which from the mountaine (with a radiant eye)
Braud the bright Cressit of the glorious skye;
Moouing his princely majestie to see,
Whence this applause so sodainly should bee,
Whose sinewed wings (in their resistles course)
Beat the thinne Ayre, with such a vyolent forse,

That

The Owle.

That the light Birds drip't head-long from the skyes,
The rocks and Forrests trembling with the noyes,
Some-what amaz'd at this vn-usuall fight,
To see his people in this piteous plight:
His soueraigne eare doth presently addresse,
Willing to heare the cause of their distresse,
To whom the poore Owle (his obedience done)
Thus to his Liedge Lord, reuerently begon:
Monarche of all that beat the ayre with wings,
Thou Bird of *Loue*, beloued amongst kings:
Here stands an Oke well tymbered, largely spred,
That many a day hath borne his curled head,
Aboue his fellows dwelling farr and neare,
That in the Forrest neuer found his peere,
Whose root well fastned in the frutefull ground,
His barke so louely and his heart so sound,
(Through his great wealth) grew insolent and proud,
Because the Birds that in his boughs did shrowd,
Vnto his praise continually did sing,
And kept their vigils to th' enamored spring,
The virgin-huntresse sworne to Dians Bowe,
Here in this shade her quarries did bestow,
And for their Nymphs building amorous Bowers,
Oft drest this tree with Anadems of flowers,
And Flora chose her Nurcery here to shield,
Her tender buds the Infants of the field,
By which, this tree grewe arrogant in time,

The Owle.

In his ranck sap hath bred a loathsome flyme,
Whose nature and vile qualitie is such,
Strongly to holde what euer it doth tutch,
And not content to minister this meane,
Which in short time might haue vndone vs cleane;
But euen his boughs the Birds haue honoured so,
Lastly imploy'd vnto their generall woe, 1120
That when thy subjects dreading no deceit,
Came to this Tree as to their safe retreat
Falsely betrai'd, and he that sped the best,
Hardly escap't, with feathers at the least.
Those that I could as I had power and might,
Though with much paine, yet lastly did acquight.
The rest, whose freedome doth exceed my reach,
O King of Birds I humbly thee beseech
In mercy, let thy mightines puruay,
To rancome from this imminent decay. 1130

When now the Eagle cutting off his tale,
And euen for sorrowe waxing wan and pale;
At which sad sight, this poore implumed crew,
Stand faintly trembling in their Soueraigns view:
And hauing stretch't his Lordly tallant forth,
To show th' acceptance of this deed of worth;
You sillye Birds, you wretched Foules (quoth he)
Hence-forth let this a freindly warning be.
Had you (as nature and our lawes admit)
Built where your noble Auncestors did sit, 1140

Wisely

The Owle.

Wisely prouiding to maintaine their state,
Whose names and freedoms you participate,
You had not thus bene spoyled of your goods,
For subtiltie now dwelleth in the woods.
For if too high and haughtily you soare,
Those see your falles that houer neere the shoare.
If in the Cedar you your nests dispose,
The dreadfull lightning euer threatneth those.
If in the lowe earth (in the flattering shade)
The Foulers snares there secretly are laide.
Then my deere subjects, as you wish my good,
Or haue respect to your succeeding brood,
Let your wise fathers an example giue,
And by their rules learne thriftily to liue.
Let these weake Birds, that want wher-with to fight,
Submit to those that are of grip and might.
Let those of power, the weaker still protect,
So none shall need his safetie to suspect;
Suppressing those enormities that are,
Whose cure belongs vnto our Soueraigne care.
For when wealth growes into a few mens hands,
And to the great, the poore in many bands;
The pride in Court doth make the Countrie leane,
The abject rich holdes auncient honor meane.
Mens wits employ'd to base and seruyle shifts,
And Lay-men taught, by learn'd mens subtill drifts;
Ill with this state 't must incidently fare.

The Owle.

For euen as from th' infection of the ayre,
Sundry contagious sicknesses proceed,
These mischiefes more continually do breed.
Shun beastly lust (you young well feathered Foule)
That wounds the body, and confounds the soule.
That as the subtil ft of the Syrens brood,
Bindes all the spirits and ouer-comes the blood;
Darkning the purenes of the inward light,
Weakneth the sense and murd'reth reason quite.
And you that sit as Iudges of the Lawe,
Let not vile gaine your equal Ballance drawe.
O! still retaine the *Ethiopi*ans guise,
(As iust and vpright, as select and wise)
That in their iudgements (sacred and profound)
Dispos'd them euer meekely on the ground;
To shoue, the Angels (sitting ouer head)
Them were to iudge, as they had censured.

Thus spake the Eagle, when with muttering noyse
The rest attentue to his power-full voyce;
Giuing a signall of their admiration,
The Owle this while in serious contemplation
Softly replyes: O mightie soueraigne!
With all the Synod of thy winged traine,
Th'abondant ioyes that in my hart do throng,
Require more organs then the onely tongue.
O blessed Birds! how sweet is your subjection
Vnder the safe and absolute protection?

The Owle.

Of so exact and excellent a King,
So sole and perfect in his gouerning:
The reason this (my graue selected Peeres)
Because tis knowne that in these latter yeeres,
The peacefull state prepos't'rously disturb'd,
By such whose power the great haue hardly curb'd.
The iocund *Troasile* for his varying note,
Clad by the *Eagle* in a speckled coate;
Because his voyce had judgement for the *Palme*,
Suppos'd him selfe sole patrone of our calme.
All say, for singing he had neuer peere:
But there were some that did his vertue feare.
Why should'st thou then ambitiously despise
The manly *Falcon*? on whose courage lyes
The Kingdomes safetie, which abroad doth reime,
By forraigne warres to keepe vs safe at home.
I knowe, the straine of an alluring tongue
Can tye the full care and detaine it long,
But other fortunes, and the altered place,
Craue new directions and an active grace.
The former vertue may consist alone,
But better two (if firmly ioyn'd in one)
Experience once (by seruice in the warres)
Did quote his strong Authorities in scarres;
But in this latter time, it hath beene said,
The tongue doth all contemning th'others aid.
Virtue whose chiefe praise in the act doth stand,

Could

The Owle.

Could wish the tongue still coupled with the hand;
But in the Cocke which death vntimebly wrackt;
In him was both the elegance and act;
O when that Bird was ransht from our sight;
(Intombing him) the world intomb'd delight;
Let neuer accent passe my mournfull pen;
That leaues his fame vnregistred to men.

The Muses vayled with sad Cypres tree;
Vpon his graue, shall powre their teares with mee.
O! if the world can weep so many teares

As his losse craves, or: if in Heauen appears
More plentious sorow; let them both agree
T'lament that hower that rest the earth of thee!

O! thought I not some spirit could giue thee more;
Then this small portion of my scantled store;
I would not leaue (I first would leaue to liue)
To giue thee fame: O who can greater giue!

This said: sunk downe, as growing faint with spea-
Sighing withall, as though his hart were breaking.

The Princely Eagle pitying of his plight,
To cheere the poore Owle doing all he might;
The Birds applauding with a free consent
Followed the Eagle (with deuout intent)

To the great mountaine, to haue all amended:
Thus I awak't: and here my Dreame was ended.

FINIS.



